

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE EMPIRE AND CHRISTIANITY

THE reorganisation of the Empire, begun by Diocletian, had been continued along the same lines by Constantine the Great. There were still further developments under their successors, but these two were the real founders of the Imperial system which was to subsist in the eastern half of the Empire for more than eleven hundred years. In other words, Diocletian and Constantine gave the Empire, if not a new lease of life, at least a new impetus and a new start, and we may here present a brief sketch of the reforms which they introduced into practically every sphere of governmental activity. We have already seen how profoundly changed was the position of the Emperor himself. He was no longer essentially a Roman Imperator, a supreme War-Lord, a soldier Chief of State. He had become a King in a palace, secluded from the gaze of the vulgar, surrounded with all the attributes and ornaments of an eastern monarch, and robed in gorgeous vestments stiff with gold and jewels. Men were taught to speak and think of him as superhuman and sacrosanct, to approach him with genuflexion